



# Veterans Gazette



**The Quarterly Newsletter for Veterans and Visitors**

**Fall 2015**

## Message from the Director

*We have successfully wrapped up another Fiscal Year at our VA and Community Based Outpatient Clinics, and I could not be more thankful for the hard work and commitment of our VA staff.*

*We have completed a host of performance improvement projects, made improvements to our parking lot and laboratory. We also have had a number of successful surveys and visits to ensure we are following processes and procedures supporting safety, quality of care, and other operations, and have engaged with more community agencies than in any other year on record.*

*You will find a number of topics within this newsletter to keep you engaged and more informed about your VA. We hope you will find the information beneficial.*

*Thank you for your service and for allowing us to provide you care. We look forward to another great year here in Saginaw and at our Community Based Outpatient Clinics in Alpena, Bad Axe, Cadillac, Cheboygan County, Clare, Gaylord, Grayling, Oscoda, and Traverse City. We hope you will think so too!*

*-Ms. Peggy W. Kearns  
Medical Center Director*



## Leadership Changes

Our VA welcomes new Associate Director for Patient Care Services, Mr. Steven Haag. Mr. Haag will oversee nursing operations for our VA and Community Based Outpatient Clinics.

Former Chief of Staff, Christopher Blasy, has transferred to the VA in Dublin, Georgia as their Chief of Staff. Recruitment is underway for a new Chief of Staff.



# A Year In Review

- ◆ We welcomed 6,533 new Veterans who enrolled for VA health care from October 2014 through September 2015.
- ◆ We cared for a total of 34,716 Veterans, with 1,675 being women.
- ◆ We completed 414,250 outpatient visits.
- ◆ We had 474 admissions to our Acute Care/Telemetry Unit and 525 admissions to Community Living Center.

## Candida



**VA Staff Are Recognized  
For Their Commitment to  
Educating Employees on Planetree  
Principles to Promote  
an Enhanced and Positive Veteran  
Care Experience**



**Blind Rehab Staff Provided  
Information for  
White Cane Day  
On October 15, 2015**



The Former Prisoner of War Group took a trip on the Princess Wenona, followed by lunch at Gatsby's.



Local Florists Honor Veterans with "Make Someone Smile Mugs"



Our VA hosted the annual POW\*MIA Day Ceremony and Luncheon on September 18, 2015





## Relationship Based Care Continues To Grow

Great strides are being made in enhancing Relationship Based Care. Each inpatient clinical unit and our Ambulatory Surgery are embracing methods of caring for Veterans in a way that helps to build varying relationships throughout the care process to improve the Veteran's experience, as well as improving staff's care delivery and work satisfaction.



We continue to utilize Integrated Therapies to include Tai Chi, Massage Therapy, Healing Touch, and acupuncture, to name a few, to assist Veterans with pain management, comfort, and healing.

## New Clinical Management Team

We welcome Dr. Zirka Kalynych, Chief, Primary Care; Dr. Thomas Campana, Chief, Surgical Service; and Dr. Justin Clutter, Chief, Medical Service to our leadership team.

## Influenza Season:

Please get your flu shot and protect yourself and others around you. Flu vaccines are available at any of our VA locations. Please talk with your care team today!!!





# Community Events



We held a Health Fair in Gaylord, Michigan in September 2015

We had the opportunity to engage in many significant events throughout the year. A total of 119 events were reported.

We are collaborating with many of our Veteran partners throughout Michigan to better serve Veterans in our communities. One way we are doing that is participating in Veteran Community Action Teams (VCATs).

## Wounded Warrior Program

Introducing Our  
Wounded Warrior (AW2) Advocate  
Kimberly Burton, LLMFT

She is located in the North Clinic (around the corner from the Canteen) and can be reached at (989) 497-2500, Extension 13389. She works with seriously injured Veterans discharged after September 10, 2001.



## Long Term Care Surey

We welcomed the Long-Term Institute in September 2015 for a survey or our Community Living Center.

This was a successful survey with opportunities for improvements being worked on.

## What is VLER Health?

You might have seen materials around your VA facility or had a Veteran ask you about VLER Health Exchange—the Virtual Lifetime Electronic Record Health—program. This program is intended to improve the quality of care our Veterans receive. VLER Health Exchange does this by ensuring VA clinicians have electronic access to real-time, non-VA health information. Access to this information supports care coordination among Veterans' VA and non-VA health care givers.

## How does health information exchange benefit our Veterans?

VLER Health may:

- Increase care coordination for Veterans.
- Aid VA health care givers in making informed decisions.
- Improve Veteran care and health outcomes.
- Stop duplicate tests.
- Increase patient safety.
- Give VA health care givers real-time access to more information about their patients.

## How can Veterans sign up for VLER Health?

Signing up is fast and easy. You may sign up in person, through the mail, by fax, or online.

Veterans can visit [www.va.gov/VLER](http://www.va.gov/VLER) for a complete list of instructions.

## Educational TV Channel Introduced to VA Waiting Rooms

We have implemented a new health education channel, Channel 79, in our waiting rooms. Because we are a professional healthcare organization, our goal is to promote good health, fitness, and educational information to help Veterans improve their health and well-being. We also have Guest Wi-Fi available.

## Service Dog vs. Companion Animal or Pet

Our VA welcomes any Service Dog who may accompany a Veteran or visitor, with exception to a few areas should the presence of an animal create a significant health risk or if the animal's behavior is judged disruptive.

We do not, however, allow lap dogs or other non-Service animals to accompany a Veteran throughout the medical facility.

Please ask a staff member if you have any questions.

## Special Program Points of Contact

### **Suicide Prevention Coordinator**

989-497-2500, extension 11778

### **Former Prisoner of War Advocate**

989-497-2500, extension 11798

### **Military Sexual Trauma Coordinator**

989-497-2500, extension 15713

### **Multiple Sclerosis Coordinator**

989-497-2500, extension 11440

### **Seamless Transition**

989-497-2500, extension 11794

### **VA Caregiver Support Coordinator**

989-497-2500, extension 11953

### **Veterans Justice Outreach Coordinators**

989-497-2500, extension 11916 or  
extension 11694

### **Women Veterans Coordinator**

989-497-2500, extension 11560

## **Suicide Prevention Hotline**

**1-800-273-8255**

**Press 1**

### ***PTSD Awareness***

***Learn, Connect, and  
Share***

***Visit***

***[www.ptsd.va.gov](http://www.ptsd.va.gov)***







### **Clement C. VanWagoner**

Department of Veterans Affairs  
Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
180 North State Avenue  
Alpena, Michigan 49707



### **Bad Axe Veterans Affairs**

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
1142 S. Van Dyke Road  
Bad Axe, MI 48413



### **Cadillac Veterans Affairs**

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
1909 N. Mitchell Street  
Cadillac, MI, 49601



### **Cheboygan County**

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
14540 Mackinaw Highway  
Mackinaw City, MI 49701



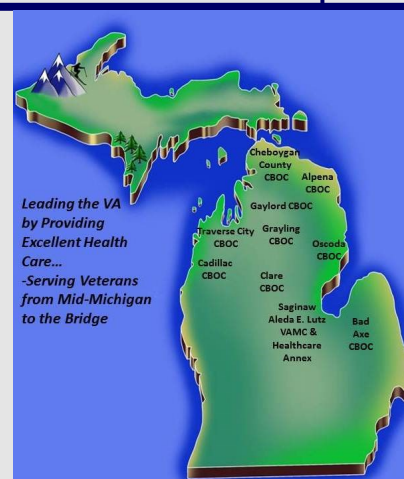
### **Clare Veterans Affairs**

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
11775 N. Isabella  
Clare, MI 48617



### **Gaylord Veterans Affairs**

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
806 S. Otsego  
Gaylord, Michigan 49735



## Community Based Outpatient Clinics

### Grayling Veterans Affairs

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
1680 Hartwick Pines Road  
Grayling, Michigan 49738



### Oscoda Veterans Affairs

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
5671 Skeel Avenue, Suite 4  
Oscoda, Michigan 48750



### Traverse City Veterans Affairs

Community Based Outpatient Clinic  
3271 Racquet Club Drive  
Traverse City, Michigan 49684



### Veterans Affairs Healthcare Annex

4241 Barnard Street  
Saginaw, MI 48603

### Aleda E. Lutz VA Medical Center

1500 Weiss Street  
Saginaw, MI 48602  
1-800-406-5143

Call Center—Extension 11230

Tele-Nurse—Extension 11240

[www.saginaw.va.gov](http://www.saginaw.va.gov)

Facebook:

[www.facebook.com/VASaginaw](https://www.facebook.com/VASaginaw)

MyHealthVet:

[www.myhealth.va.gov](http://www.myhealth.va.gov)



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HEALTH  
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Defining  
**EXCELLENCE**  
in the 21st Century

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[www.saginaw.va.gov](http://www.saginaw.va.gov) to access the  
web links provided.